

Response to Amendment

The following is in response to the amendment filed on April 18, 2008.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-37 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Claims 1-10, 16-29, and 35-37 are allowed, because in a method for moistening a web of paper or paperboard comprising feeding steam into a steam blow cavity open toward the web to form a steam atmosphere, the prior art does not disclose or suggest further applying a spray of liquid heated to a temperature higher than an ambient temperature from at least one nozzle onto the web in the steam atmosphere wherein the liquid is heated by a source separate from the steam.

Claims 11-15 and 30-34 are allowed, because in an apparatus for moistening a web of paper or paperboard comprising at least one nozzle for feeding steam into a steam blow cavity that is open toward a moving web to form a steam atmosphere, the prior art does not disclose or suggest further providing at least one nozzle for applying a spray of a liquid heated to a temperature higher than an ambient temperature onto the web in the steam atmosphere and a heating device for heating the liquid using a source separate from the steam.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed April 18, 2008 have been fully considered.

In view of the arguments and amendments to the claims, Applicant has overcome the rejections set forth previously under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) or 103(a) over Hamel (US 6,962,296). Hamel is the closest prior art, and it is recognized that Hamel applies water and steam to a web wherein the water is mixed with the steam and heated by the steam.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric Hug whose telephone number is (571) 272-1192.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Steven Griffin can be reached on 571 272-1189. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Eric Hug/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1791